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BOOK REVIEWS.

THE RECORDS OF THE VIRGINIA COMPANY OF LONDON. THE COURT BOOK, FROM THE MANUSCRIPT IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS. Edited with an Introduction and Bibliography by Susan Myra Kingsbury, A. M., Ph. D., Instructor in History and Economics, Simmons College. Preface by Herbert Levi Osgood, A. M., Ph. D., Professor of American History in Columbia University. Washington Government Printing Office, 1906, 2 Vols., pp. 636, 609. (Published by the Library of Congress.)

At last the long desired has been accomplished, and we have, in most fitting garb, that great fundamental source of American history—the records of the Virginia Company of London. Messrs. Putnam, Ford, and Osgood, Misses Kingsbury and Stinson, the Public Printer, and all concerned, have every reason to congratulate themselves, and will assuredly receive the hearty thanks of all students of our history for the admirable work they have done.

We are glad to claim for our Society a prominent part in the various efforts to make public the contents of these invaluable documents. Not only were the extracts made by Mr. Conway Robinson, and admirably edited by Mr. R. A. Brock, published in our series of Collections in 1889; but we likewise had made a complete copy of the Randolph Transcript of the records of the Company, in the possession of the Society, with a view to immediate publication. On account of the differences between the Randolph Transcript and that in the Library of Congress, this plan was abandoned. "The Virginia Company," 2 Vols., 1889, has, however, up to this time, been the chief source of information for students of the history of the Company.

There could hardly be anything more useless than a discussion of the historic value of these records. This is a common-place to every student of American history. Beginning on April 28, 1619, and ending June 7, 1624, these minutes and the accompanying papers have been quoted and referred to by every writer on the early Colonial period. To us in Virginia they are of intense interest.

Though the value of the records themselves needs no demonstration, too much emphasis cannot be laid on the admirable character of the publication before us.

Miss Kingsbury states (p. 79) that the Robinson Transcripts used by this Society in 1889 contain little more than half of the original records. The importance of having the whole of the proceedings of the Company, which have been preserved, is obvious, and this importance is enhanced

by Miss Kingsbury's introduction with its study of the history of the Company and of the records relating to it. Attention has already been called in this Magazine, to the importance of Miss Kingsbury's work.

It has been said above that no discussion of the value of these records is needed. This is, in a sense, entirely true; but the estimate with which Professor Osgood begins his preface is too striking a summary to be omitted. He says:

"The records, and especially the Court Book, of the Virginia Company of London, have long been regarded as among the most precious manuscript treasures which have found lodgment within the United States. Not only is their inherent value as a manuscript source very great, but a sentimental value attaches to them. This has a twofold origin. It arises, in the first place, from the fact that they belong at once to the romantic period of our beginnings and to the heroic period of England's great struggle against absolutism. The men who figured in the pages of this record were at the same time playing their parts, on the one side or the other, in the controversies which were beginning with James I, and which were to broaden and deepen under his son until England was plunged into the agonies of the great Civil war. They were contemporaries, and in not a few cases associates of Coke and Eliot and Hampden, of Bacon and Wentworth and Buckingham. The names of Sandys and the Ferrars stand high on the roll of patriots by which the first generation of the Stewart period is distinguished. The same men also, together with a long list of the merchants and nobles of the time, were deeply interested in discovery and colonization. As successors of Gilbert and Raleigh they were planting a new England beyond the Atlantic. About this enterprise still clung some of the spirit and memories of the Elizabethan seamen and their early struggles with Spain. In the days when Smythe and Sandys were active the prosaic age of English colonization had not yet begun. The glamour of romance, of the heroic, attaches to the founding of Virginia and Plymouth, and makes them fit subjects for the poet. By the time when the other colonies were founded the glow and inspiration had grown faint or wholly disappeared. In the Records of the Virginia Company some reflection may be seen of this early zeal of the plans and ideals to which it gave rise. Even their pages, cast in a style which is quite unusual in records of this nature, make one realize that he is in the company of noble and earnest spirits, men who were conscious that they were engaged in a great enterprise. The Court Book itself, now that it is printed in full, will be found to be a worthy monument of English speech, as it was used at the close of the Elizabethan epoch and by contemporaries of Shakespeare and Bacon."

The glamour of which Professor Osgood speaks will be felt by every

earnest student, who, especially if a Virginian, will find these records, the minutes of a commercial company though they be, of absorbing interest. The very names of Southampton, Ferrar, Sandys and others have to him an inspiring sound. To one at all familiar with our early history it is impossible to glance at any page of the beautiful volumes before us without finding something of information or interesting suggestion. Opening for instance the first volume, entirely at random, at pages 500-501, we note the names of Nicholas Ferrar, George Sandys, John Bland, Jadwyn, Woodliffe and Gookin—all names which have meaning for us. And on the same pages are orders in regard to the glass works near Jamestown, the contest between Bargrave and Martin, and Gookin's contract to carry cattle to Virginia.

While the "Virginia Company" published by this Society will always be valuable on account of its introduction and notes, those who are familiar with that work will be surprised to find how much of the records was omitted by Mr. Robinson. "The part of the court book which reveals most in regard to internal organization, commercial activity and inner life of the Company is not included in those abstracts. Thus such data as that which concerns the trouble with Spain over the *Treasurer*, the suit with William Wye, the accusations against Argall, the Pierce patent, and many other private grants are not included."

The Records are published in two large quarto volumes, attractively bound in gray, with the seal of the Company in gilt on the sides, and contain more than 1300 pages. They are printed on excellent paper, in large and handsome type, with a special font for abbreviations, erasures, etc. There are four fac-similes illustrating the writing of the various copyists.

It is regretted that the praise which can be given to all other parts of the work cannot be accorded unreservedly to the index. It is difficult to see what plan was in view in its compilation.

There is no attempt (as there should certainly have been) to give in the index a reference to every appearance of every name. In hundreds of cases this has not been done. For instance, there appears to be not a single reference to the names of those present at the first meeting, and some of them, Sir Thomas Wilford for example, do not appear in the index at all. There is no question that the student should have been able to trace every mention of these fathers of American colonization.

Testing the index, we find on the second page of the proceedings mention of a suspected deer stealer, whom the King desired to have sent to Virginia. This opens up an interesting subject, but neither "convict" nor "felon" appear in the index.

On the page next succeeding is an important motion of Sandys relative to Sir Thomas Smythe; but no reference to this appears.

The Records, of course, contain frequent entries in regard to the important office of treasurer, but the index has but one reference

One desiring to know something of Virginia's infant industries, will look, but look in vain, in the index for "iron," "salt," and "glass." Each of these was a subject for frequent consideration by the Company, and iron and glass works were established in the colony.

Taking up errors of another sort, we find that Vol. I, p. 31, the reference given after *A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colony*, is incorrect, 32 being the correct page. And, if the publications beginning with *True* were to be grouped in the index, why omit Hamor's *True Relation*.

Neither under "charter," nor "letters patent" is there any notice of the revocation, though of course there is an account of this in the introduction.

In spite of its faults, however, the index may be considered fairly good.

While we should like to see the Records of the Virginia Company of London in the hands of every student of history in the United States, we could also wish that the orders from Virginia alone would be so large that they would exhaust this edition.

It is announced by the Librarian of Congress that the edition is limited. The price is fixed at the wonderfully low sum of \$4 00 the set, payable in drafts or postal orders to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington.

JOURNAL OF THE HOUSE OF BURGESSES OF VIRGINIA, 1770-1772.

Edited by John Pendleton Kennedy, Richmond, Virginia, M. C. M.

VI. Library Board, Virginia State Library, pp. xxxv, 333.

The second volume of the series of journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, which is being issued by the State Library Board, is presented in the same beautiful form as its predecessor. The sessions of Assembly during the years named were not as momentous as those which immediately succeeded and preceded them, but are full of matter of interest to the student of our history.

The preface outlines, with many illustrative documents, the chief subjects which interested the people and their representatives. These were trade with the Indians, the extension of the western boundary of the colony, the treaty with the Cherokees at Lochaber, S. C., the organization of the Ohio or Walpole Company, the Association of 1770, and the prospect for an American Episcopate.

The contest over the question of a bishop for America was a bitter one, but the House of Burgesses took no part in it except to adopt a resolution opposing the scheme.

The real and vital matter in which people and Assembly were interested was the effort to prevent the stopping or checking the west-